THE GARDEN OF EDEN ACCOUNT: THE CHIASTIC STRUCTURE OF GENESIS 2-3

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Introduction

While theologians such as Derek Beattie have attempted to uncover the meaning of Gen 2-3, a satisfactory and definitive answer has remained elusive.1 In addition to traditional historical-critical methodology (source criticism), scholars have employed many other approaches including religiohistorical, social, psychoanalytical, and feminist approaches, as well as several structuralist, semiotic, and literary models.2


(4) king ideology: W. Brueggemann, “From Dust to Kingship,” ZAW 84 (1972): 1-18; M. Hutter, “Adam als Gärtner und König (Gen 2,8.15),” BZ 30 (1986): 258-262;
(10) psychoanalytical approach: E. Drewermann, Strukturen des Bösen: Die Jahwistische Urgeschichte in exegetischer, psychoanalytischer und philosophischer Sicht, Paderborn

authors and which are differentiated from the narrative of the Fall, then a study of the accounts should reveal incoherence and linguistic, literary, and thematic inconsistencies among them. On the other hand, if both accounts were composed by the same author, then it should be possible to find coherence, concordance, and linguistic, literary, and thematic consistencies between them. This article argues the latter position: that Gen 1 is the sole Creation account, properly so called, in Genesis; that Gen 2-3 constitutes another account, here referred to as the Garden of Eden Account (GEA); and that these two accounts form a textual unity that is best explained as the composition of a single author and/or editor.

Exegetes and literary critics believe the place to begin an evaluation of Gen 2-3 is the text as a whole (Geschehensbogen). Beattie noted that an important reason for the diversity of interpretation is the presence of too much derash (philosophical and midrashic exegesis) and too little pesbat (philological and literal exegesis) in modern scholarship. Thus his analysis shows the necessity of coming closer to the Hebrew text by giving greater attention to its linguistic and literary characteristics. Building on Beattie's approach, the purpose of this article is to present the literary structure of Gen 2-3 by considering the Hebrew text of Gen 2-3 as one complete textual unit. The article's hypothesis is that the literary, linguistic, and thematic unity of the Hebrew text of Gen 2-3 indicates authorship and/or redaction by a single hand.

Exegetical Implications of Genesis 2:4 for the Literary Structure of Genesis 2-3

The locus classicus divides Gen 2:4 into two separate verses with each assigned to a different author. However, an attentive reading of modern exegetical literature reveals that there is less consistency in the interpretation of Gen 2:4

4For example, Westermann, 190, finds in "Gen 2-3 repetitions, lack of agreement, lack of balance, gaps in the line of thought, contradictions. One could not expect anything else." These he attributes to "the many-sided process of the formation of this text."


than has been suggested previously.  For instance, T. Stordalen indicates that the parallel Sumerian or Akkadian texts present an initially negative framework of the world before creation. By way of contrast, however, Gen 2:4b seems to give a positive framework of the world before the creation of humanity.  While there is no external evidence that indicates that Gen 2:4b is the beginning of a new account, if such evidence were in existence it would indicate that the new account begins in Gen 2:5. Therefore, the only way to read Gen 2:4b as an original part of Gen 2-3 would be to consider it a dependent sentence, which would be in accordance with the locus classicus.  In that case, the syntactical features found in Gen 2:4b-7 would be accepted.

On the contrary, however, Gen 2:4b indicates that the reader is aware of some other previous account.  T. Stordalen maintains that the only obvious evidence in Gen 1-3 is that we have two different and successive accounts—Gen 1 and 2-3.

In Gen 2:4, the heavens and earth appear together in a chiastic antithetical construction that produces a perfect transition between Gen 1 and 2-3:

A heavens and earth (2:4a)
A' earth and heavens (2:4b)

G. J. Wenham notes the antithetical chiastic structure of v. 4 in the MT:

A heavens
B earth
C created (bîbbârâm)
C' made (âsôít)
B' earth
A' heavens

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9See, e.g., Kikawada and Quinn, 60; Wenham, Genesis 1-15, 49, 55-56; Wallace, 23, n. 1; 59, n. 39; Van Wolde, 72-73.


12To read 2:4b as a dependent sentence of v. 7, with two complete verbal sentences between them (vv. 5 and 6).

13Stordalen, 169.

14Ibid; see also N. M. Sarna, Genesis, JPS Torah Commentary (New York: JPS, 1989), 16; and H. Cassuto, A Commentary on the Book of Genesis (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1978). Cassuto, for example, has made a clear distinction between Gen 1 and the story recorded in Gen 2-3. He argues that Gen 1 relates “The Story of Creation” and Gen 2-3, more precisely Gen 2:4-24, is part of the “Story of the Garden of Eden,” which stretches to the end of Gen 3 (1:7, 71, 84-94, 159, 169-171).

15Wenham, Genesis 1-15, 46.
An exegesis of Gen 2:4 leads us to the following exegetical implications:

1. With regard to Gen 2-3, the most important implication is that the GEA is not an account of Creation centered on the heavens and the earth as in Gen 1, but rather the narrative focuses on the earth and its inhabitants (i.e., humans, animals, and plants) some time after their creation.

2. Consequently, Gen 2-3 presents a new story that is the account of the origin of evil and death (Gen 2:9, 16-17; 3:1ff.), while Gen 1 focuses on the origin of goodness and life (Gen 1:4, 10ff.).

3. The importance of the Gen 2-3 narrative lies in its introduction of the origin of evil in the world. Without this account, the basic postulate of the Gen 1 Creation account (i.e., the essential kindness of the divine Creator and the goodness of his original creation; cf. Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31) would be incomprehensible.16

4. The second narrative, Garden of Eden account, which begins with 2:5, contains the formula terem yihyeh ("was not yet").17 A review of parallel ANE texts indicates that this formula could not serve as a significant exegetical indicator in the Creation narratives. The presence of this expression does not indicate that it was originally an exclusive characteristic of the stories of Creation. Rather, the evidence suggests that this formula was simply a narrative technique applied to different texts, often in stories of primordial times.18 However, the literary function of this formula seems to be fixed. The purpose of the formula is to expose a negative situation and to define certain deficiencies (or problems) that will be covered (or resolved) in the narrative. This literary function is so stable

16See Sarna, 16.
18While this formula may not be present in many of the ANE Creation myths (it is absent in "Enki y Ninmah" and KAR 4; G. Pettinato, Das altorientalische Menschenbild und die sumerischen und Akkadischen Schöpfungsmynthen [Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1971], 69-73, 74-81; and even in several minor texts included in A. Heidel, The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of the Creation [Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1942], 52-54 [2 texts], 60-64 [4 more texts]), the formula does appear in other origin myths (which should not be classified as Creation myths, though they do contain Creation episodes) such as Lugal-e (see Pettinato, 86-90, 91-96), The Sumerian Flood Story (see lines 47-50, introducing a new subsection, see also M. Civil in Atra-Hasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood, ed. W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969], 141), the Atra-Hasis, and in Hesiod (for Atra-Hasis, see ibid., 42-43; for Hesiod, see H. G. Evelyn-White, Hesiod: The Homeric Hymns and Homerica [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977], 497; cf. Kikawada and Quinn, 37). The same is true for several Egyptian texts and others used by Westermann (60-62). Of course, the formula still appears in actual Creation accounts such as the Enûma Elish, the Eridu Story of Creation, and in Philo of Byblos. For a detailed exhibition of all the texts, see Heidel, 8, 50, 66.
that expressions of the formula can reappear verbatim in the later account. In this way, at least in several ANE texts, the formula gives specific information about the topic of the narrative it introduces.\textsuperscript{19}

*The Chiastic Structure of Genesis 2-3*

A study of the GEA reveals a carefully built chiastic structure that begins with an introduction (the creation of man), referred to in the antecedent account of Gen 1 and which directly links both accounts. Immediately in section A, God places the created man in the Garden of Eden. From this point, the account increases in intensity, from God’s command to humanity to care for the garden in section B to the climax of the account—humanity’s disobedience to the divine command. This instance of disobedience serves as the center of the antithetical chiastic structure (C). From this climax, the account decreases in intensity with the appearance in section B’ (the first antithetical turn) of the consequences of the transgression—the discovery, the test, and the divine judgment. The GEA concludes in section A’ with the total decrease of intensity—the created humanity is expelled by God from the Garden of Eden—which recalls the beginning of the account, but with the opposite effect. The literary structure of Gen 2-3 reveals a chain of events that are assembled together like a puzzle extraordinarily designed by its author. The linguistic pieces of the Hebrew text come together exactly.

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<td>The Expulsion of Man from the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Garden of Eden (Gen 3:22-24)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A || A':
The Placement of Man in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:5-15)

The Expulsion of Man from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:22-24)

Genesis 2:5-6 forms a poetic introduction with the following meter: 3 + 3, 3 + 2, 2 + 3, 2 + 3, 3 + 3. Based on this formulation of the Hebrew text, the GEA will be analyzed using the methodology of literary microstructure or microsection. A microstructure or microsection is a literary and linguistic fragment of the Hebrew text that embraces one or several verses of the narrative in the same section or in antithetical sections and can be presented in the account in parallel panels (e.g., ABA'B') or in antithetical chiasm (e.g., ABB'A').

Before analyzing the antithetical chiastic structure between A || A', we will consider the microstructure in parallel panels that embraces section A.

**Microstructure in Parallel Panels of Genesis 2:5-15**

A₀ there was not yet any plant of the field, rain, or man to work the ground (2:5)

A₁ streams from the earth watered the whole surface of the ground (2:6)

A₂ God formed man of the ground (2:7)

A₃ God planted a garden in Eden and made trees grow (2:8-9)

A₁' a river flowed from the Garden of Eden (2:10-14)

A₂' the Lord God put the man in the Garden of Eden (2:15)

The general situation of the earth, as described in Gen 2:5-6, was undoubtedly a situation of terem yib'yeḥ ("not yet productive"). Genesis 2:5-6 presents the scenario for the first event that takes place in 2:7 — wayya'iser yhwh 'elohim ("the Lord God formed").

Section A of Gen 2:5-15 is structured around a triad of significant elements: vegetation, water, and humanity. The absence or lack of existence of the three elements is recorded in v. 5. Likewise, v. 6 notes the existence of water on earth, while v. 7 describes man's creation from the earth, and vv. 8-9 acknowledge the existence of vegetation in Eden. Finally, vv. 10-15 repeat the same elements by means of synonymous parallelism. Thus, the

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21All scriptural texts are taken from the NIV.

emphasize on water is central to the meaning of the term ēḏen ("Eden"), suggesting a place where there is an abundant supply of water. Its verbal root *dn means primarily "to give an abundant supply of water," and, secondarily, "to enrich, to prosper, to make exuberant."  

Genesis 2:10-14 serves as an interlude (thus interrupting a series of consecutive imperfets), located between Gen 2:8(9) and 2:15 (the key verses of section A). This interlude passage describes the geographical location of Eden, showing the garden to be the source of water for the surrounding countryside. Recent data suggest that the physical description of the account is authentic.

Now we will analyze the antithetical sections A1|A2, the antithetical chiastic microstructure of Gen 2:8, 15|Gen 3:22-24 that constitutes the thematic, textual, literary, and linguistic limits of the GEA.

**Antithetical Chiastic Microstructure of**

**Genesis 2:8, 15 | | Genesis 3:23-24**

A4 the Lord God planted a garden in Eden in the east, in which he put the man he had formed (2:8)

A5 the Lord God took the man (2:15a)

A6 and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it (2:15bc)

A6’ the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken (3:23)

A5’ after he drove the man out (3:24a)

A4’ he placed cherubim on the east side of the Garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life (3:24bc)

1. **The antithetical microsections A4|A6’.** In A4, the Lord God is presented as the one who planted a garden in Eden in the east, where he “put” (wayyāšēm, Qal imperfect of the verb sūm) the man he had formed. Microsection A6’ presents a clear antithetical parallelism in which the divine name does not appear. The verb "to place" (wayyāskēn, Hiphil imperfect of the verb sākan) appears.

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23This etymology leans on Gen 13:10: “Lot looked up and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan was well watered, like the garden of the Lord”; see Cassuto, 108.

24For an analysis of the diverse proposals of the etymological meaning of the Hebrew terms ēl (2:6) and ēḏen, see D. T. Tsumura, The Earth and the Waters in Genesis 1 and 2, JSOTSup 83 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 94-116, 123-136.

synonymous to that of wayyäsēm ("put") in 2:8 and wayyannihebū ("put," lit. "caused him to rest") of 2:15. The term miggedem ("east"), describing the geographical location of the Garden of Eden, appears in both 2:8 and 3:24bc. Additionally, the same expression, gan 'ëden ("Garden of Eden"), appears in construct relation in 2:8 and 3:24bc. Finally, the usage of the direct object particle offsets the terms 'et-hā'ēnūɛibim ("cherubim," 3:24bc) and 'et-hā'ādām ("man," 2:8). In 3:24, God places the action on the cherubim, instead of on the man as in 2:8.

2. The antithetical microsections A₁||A₅. In A₅, the Lord God "took" (wayyiqqah, Qal imperfect of the verb lāqah) the man, while in microsection A₆, the divine name does not appear and the verb "to drive out" (waygaTesTPie1 imperfect of the verb ga74) is antithetical to the verb "to take" (A₅). Additionally, 'et-hā'ādām ("the man") is prefaced with a particle of direct object, indicating that in both A₅ and A₆ the man is the one on whom the direct action occurs—"to take" in the first case and "to drive out" in the second.

3. The antithetical microsections A₆||A₆'. Again an antithetical parallelism is created when the divine name is absent from A₆, but appears in A₆' (this construct is an inversion compared to microsections A₄ and A₅). The verb "to put" (wayyannihebū, Hiphil imperfect of the verb nāšah) is synonymous to the verb sūm ("to put") of microsection A₄, while the verb "to banish/to send forth" (wayysālhebū, Piel imperfect of the verb sālah) (A₆') is antithetical in idea and content to the verb wayyannihebū ("to put") (A₆). The phrase "a garden in Eden" (gan 'ëden) appears in A₆ and the same construct relation "Garden of Eden" (gan 'ëden) in A₆'. The verb "to work/to till" (Qal infinitive construct of the verb 'ābad) also appears in both A₆ (l'ëk̪obodāh) and A₆' (la'ābōd).²⁷

Before continuing with the analysis, we should point out that the same verb "to take care/to keep" (sāmar)²⁸ is in the Qal infinitive construct in A₆.

²⁶That the entrance of the Garden of Eden was guarded by "cherubim" (k̪rūbīm) is an indication that it was viewed as a sanctuary. Akkadian karibi were the traditional guardians of holy places or temples in the ANE, see G. J. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story," in "I Studied Inscriptions from Before the Flood": Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11, ed. R. S. Hess and D. T. Tsumura, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 4 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 401. Two k̪rūbīm on top of the ark formed the throne of God in the inner sanctuary (Exod 25:18-22), pictures of k̪rūbīm decorated the curtains of the tabernacle and walls of the temple (Exod 26:31; 1 Kgs 6:29), and two others guarded the inner sanctuary in Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 6:23-28).

²⁷This verb appears for the first time in Gen 2:5 in the same verbal form, Qal infinitive construct.

Antithetical Chiastic Microstructure of

Genesis 2:5d,7a || Genesis 3:23b

Aγ There was no man to work the ground, so the Lord God formed the
man from the dust of the ground (2:5d,7a)
Aγ, to work the ground from which he had been taken (3:23b)

The terminology used in Gen 3:23b is identical to that employed in Gen 2:5d, 7a. This chiastic microstructure is important to the structural unity of the GEA. The use of the same verb “to work/to till” (la demás, Qal infinitive construct of the verb habad) and the same noun et-ha daem (“ground”) appear in both Gen 2:5 and Gen 3:23 (sections A || A’) along with a particle of direct object, thus indicating that “the ground” is the object on which the direct action of “to work/to till” occurs. In the first case (2:5) the man’s absence is noted, while in the second case the man’s presence “to work/to till” the ground replaces the lack of work found at the beginning of the account.29 A strong thematic and linguistic parallelism also exists between “the Lord God formed the man of the ground” (2:7a) and “the ground from which he [the man] had been taken” (3:23b), where “the ground from which he had been taken” is a clear thematic reference to “the man formed [taken]” by “the Lord God out of the ground.”

Antithetical Chiastic Microstructure of

Genesis 2:9 || Genesis 3:22

Aδ the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground that were
pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were
the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:9)
Aδ, the Lord God said, “Man has become like one of us, knowing good
and evil. He must not be allowed to eat from the tree of life and live
forever” (3:22)

The terminology used in Gen 3:22 is similar to that employed in Gen 2:9.

Haifa, 1987), 668; E. Jenni and C. Westermann, eds., Diccionario Teologico del Antiguo Testamento (Madrid: Cristiandad, 1985), 2:1232-1237. It is interesting that both the man’s placement in the Garden of Eden and his expulsion are registered twice in sections A and A’.

Four carefully defined parallelisms between A and A' become evident: (1) the presence of the divine name in A and A'; (2) a thematic antithetical parallelism between human access (A) and denial to the tree of life (A'); (3) an antithetical parallelism between the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (A) and the knowledge of good and evil (A'), and (4) the thematic antithetical parallelism between “good for food” (A) and “he must not be allowed to reach out his hand and eat” (A').

These analyses demonstrate the thematic and content unity, in addition to the literary and linguistic coherence already described, that relate Gen 2 with Gen 3 and thus suggest the work and redaction of a single author. It is significant that the same divine name, yhwh "l{'im ("Lord God"), appears both at the beginning (2:5, 7-9) and at the end of the GEA (3:22-23), thus striking a telling blow to traditional source criticism's attempt to separate Gen 2 (the second account of the Creation) and Gen 3 (the account of humanity's fall) into distinct documents and accounts. A literary analysis demonstrates the lack of evidence for this traditional historical-critical position, while a structural analysis confirms the unity of composition in Gen 2 and 3.

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### The Garden of Eden Account

#### The Chiastic Structure of Gen 2-3 (II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>A'</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Placement of Man in the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:5-15)</td>
<td>The Expulsion of Man from the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:22-24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A_1</td>
<td>A_1'</td>
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<tr>
<td>- &quot;Lord God&quot; (yhwh &quot;l{'im)</td>
<td>- &quot;he placed&quot; (wayyaske'n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- &quot;put&quot; (wayyas'em)</td>
<td>- &quot;cherubim&quot; (&quot;et-bakrubim)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- &quot;the man&quot; (&quot;et-ha-am)</td>
<td>- &quot;Garden of Eden&quot; (lgan-&quot;eden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- &quot;garden in Eden&quot; (gan-&quot;eden)</td>
<td>- &quot;on the east&quot; (miqqedem) (3:24bc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- &quot;in the east&quot; (miqqedem) (2:8)</td>
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</tbody>
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30 For a further study of the techniques that unify the text, see H. van Dyke Parunak, "Oral Typsetting: Some Uses of Biblical Structure," *Bib* 62 (1981): 162-163. Parunak indicates that the patterns of the superficial structure not only divide the text into segments, but they also establish the internal unity of those segments. He distinguishes two different techniques: (1) the panel (used to describe the unity of “ABC” or “CBA”) of a structure contains a summary of the material that it developed more completely than others, e.g., the table of contents or the summary of a text; and (2) the presentation of different categories of information about one or more topics. Parunak indicates that already chiastic or alternating [in parallel panels] structures can unify the material in one or another of these ways; see also F. I. Andersen, who previously underlined the unifying force of the chiastic structure (*The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*, Janua Linguarum, Series Practica 231 [The Hague, Paris: Mouton, 1974], 119-140).
<table>
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<tr>
<th>A₅</th>
<th>A₅'</th>
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<tr>
<td>“Lord God” (yhwḥ ְlōhīm)</td>
<td>“he drove out” (wayyāqēres)</td>
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<td>“took” (wayyiqqah)</td>
<td>“the man” (ʿet-hāʾādām) (2:15a)</td>
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<td>“the man” (ʿet-hāʾādām)</td>
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<td>A₆</td>
<td>A₆’</td>
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<tr>
<td>“put” (wayyannīhēḇū)</td>
<td>“Lord God” (yhwḥ ְlōhīm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“garden in Eden” (gan-bê-ēḏen)</td>
<td>“banished” (wayyālīhēḇū)</td>
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<td>“to work” (lāʾōḇḏāḥ) (2:15bc)</td>
<td>“Garden of Eden” (miggan-ēḏen)</td>
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<td>A₇</td>
<td>A₇’</td>
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<td>“to work” (lāʾōḇḏ)</td>
<td>“to work” (lāʾōḇḏ) (3:23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“the ground” (ʿet-hāʾādāmā)</td>
<td>“the ground” (ʿet-hāʾādāmā)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground” (2:5d,7a)</td>
<td>“[the ground] from which he [the man] had been taken” (3:23b)</td>
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<td>A₈</td>
<td>A₈’</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Lord God” (yhwḥ ְlōhīm)</td>
<td>“Lord God” (yhwḥ ְlōhīm)</td>
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<td>“good for food” (wftōb lʾmʾkāl)</td>
<td>“He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take from the tree of life and eat” (wʾētāʾā pen-yiššāh yādōʾ wʾlāḏah meʾēʾēḥ bahayyīṯm wʾʾākāl)</td>
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<td>“the tree of life” (wʾēʾēḥ bahayyīm)</td>
<td>“knowing good and evil” (lāḏāʾātōb wʾʾārāʾ) (3:22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (wʾēʾēḥ hāḏāʾātōb wʾʾārāʾ) (2:9)</td>
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B || B':

**Divine Commandment and Organization of Human Life (Genesis 2:16-25)**

**Divine Judgment and Reorganization of Human Life (Genesis 3:8-21)**

In Gen 2:16, an inflection takes place with the verb “to command” (wayyāṣaw, Piel imperfect of the verb šāʾaw) that interrupts a series of consecutive imperfects of the preceding section and marks the beginning of a new antithetical section B||B’ that is different from the literary and linguistic terminology and content found in A||A’. The infinitive absolute is used to give emphasis to the antithesis, so that v. 16 is antithetical to v. 17. In addition, the infinitive absolute puts a much stronger accent on the idea contained in the associated verb.³¹

Antithetical Chiastic Microstructure of
Genesis 2:16 || Genesis 3:8

B₁ the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden” (2:16)

B₁ the man and his wife heard the sound of God as he was walking in the garden and they hid among the trees of the garden (3:8)

The beginning of section B (Gen 2:16) and the beginning of the section B' (Gen 3:8) present a marked antithetical contrast, both linguistically and thematically. In Gen 2:16, God’s presence in the garden does not produce fear in the man. God and humanity were together face to face among the trees in the garden. However in Gen 3:8, when the man and his wife “heard” (wayyisem יִשָּׁמֵעַ, Qal imperfect of the verb sāmaה) “the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden,” it brought fear to them. Their response was to “hide” (wayyithabbe יִתָּבֵב, Hithpael imperfect of the verb habāה) from God’s presence “among the trees of the garden” (beto עֵץ-בְּגָן, the same Hebrew expression of construct relation found in Gen 2:16). It is precisely here, in Gen 3:8, that God reappears after being absent from the narrative. The absence is similar to God’s lack of presence in section C (the apex of the chiasm).

Antithetical Chiastic Microstructure of
Genesis 2:16-17 || Genesis 3:11b

B₂ the Lord God commanded the man (2:16a)

B₂, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden, but not from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (2:16b-17a)

B₂, “Have you eaten from the tree, which I told you not to eat from?” (3:11b)

B₂ “that I commanded” (3:11b).

1. The antithetical microsections B₂||B₂. In B₂, the verb “to command” (sāwaא, *šwb, Piel imperfect waysaw) appears for the first time and is


32Qol (“the sound”) is probably used here to refer to the sound of steps walking; see 2 Sam 5:24; 1 Kgs 14:6; 2 Kgs 6:32; 11:13. The verb mithallēk (“walking,” Hithpael participle of the verb bādak), used here to describe the movement of the divine, is a type of Hithpael that suggests repetitive and habitual acts; see E. A. Speiser, “The Durative Hithpael: A Tanform,” JAOS 75 (1955): 118-121, esp. 119; W. A. Ward, “Notes on Some Semitic Loan-Words and Personal Names,” Or 32 (1963): 421, n. 5. The same term is used to describe the divine presence later in the tent sanctuary in Lev 26:12; Deut 23:14; 2 Sam 7:6-7. The Lord God walked in Eden as he subsequently walked in the tabernacle. This suggests that in Gen 2-3 the Garden of Eden was seen as an archetypal sanctuary.
repeated again in B₂. The usage of the word in B₂ is in the Piel perfect-suffix sīwātīkā, recalling the same idea as in 2:16. The same Hebrew phraseology and verb appear a third time in Gen 3:17b (⊂šēr sīwātīkā, Piel perfect-suffix). It is significant that this verb also appears repeatedly in relationship to God’s commands to Israel at Sinai. In texts such as Deut 5:31, the noun (mīṣwā) appears in the feminine singular from the same verbal root *sāw (cf. Deut 6:1-2, where the word appears in a noun feminine singular and in the Piel perfect form sīwā[6:1], in a noun feminine plural, and in the Piel participle form mesawwekā [6:2] respectively); and in Deut 5:32-33, the verb appears in the Piel perfect verbal form sīwā in both verses. This antithetical parallelism is also marked by the presence of the divine name in Gen 2:16 and its lack in 3:11.

2. The antithetical microsections B₃ || B₁. In the microsections B₃ || B₁, an antithetical parallelism, referred specifically to the particle of negation, appears in 2:17a as lō and in 3:11 as lēbīl; where it is especially associated with the verb “to eat” (qāʾel toʾēkāl, Qal infinitive absolute-Qal imperfect [2:16b] in B₁ and the same verb qāʾel ʾākāltā in the Qal infinitive construct-Qal perfect [3:11] in B₁). In B₂:B₃::B₄:B₂, not only are similar linguistic terms and structures repeated, but in Gen 3:11 the same idea, content, and theme are repeated.

Antithetical Chiastic Microstructure of Genesis 2:20 || Genesis 3:9
B₁ the man gave names to all the livestock (2:20)
B₂ the Lord God called the man (3:9)

The antithetical chiastic microstructure B₄ || B₂ is defined by the verb “to give name/to call” (qāʾē,33 which appears in the Qal imperfect wayyiqra’ in Gen 2:20; in v. 19, it also appears two times in the Qal imperfect). Here the man is the main character of the narrative. God brings the animals he has created to the man for him to name (2:19). The man give names “to all the livestock” (ʾēkāl-habḥēmā, a term that is composed of two nouns—masculine singular construct—feminine singular—in construct relation). In B₄, the verb “to give name/to call” appears a second time in the same verbal form (Qal imperfect wayyiqra’), but now the Lord God is the main character of the narrative. Thus in a perfect antithetical parallelism, it is God who calls the man to appear (B₄), but antithetically it is the man who gives names to all the livestock (B₄).

33BDB, 894; Holladay, 323; Klein, 590; TWOT, 2:810-811; Jenni and Westermann, 2:839-849.
Microstructure in Parallel Panels of Genesis 2:23-25 | Genesis 3:20-21

B5 the man said, “She shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man” (2:23)

B6 the man and his wife were both naked, and felt no shame (2:25)

B5 Adam named his wife Eve because she would become the mother of all the living (3:20)

B6 the Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them (3:21)

1. The antithetical microsections B5∥B6. The parallel panels found in this microstructure are significant to section B∥B'. In microsection B5, three Hebrew terms appear as fundamental linguistic elements: the man (who serves as the central character of the narrative), “to call/give name” (yiqqāreš), Niphal imperfect of the verb qārāš, cf. vv. 19-20), and “woman” (ʾissāš, due to her origin from “man” ʾiss).34

It is significant that initially the man does not name the woman in the same sense that he names the animals. A different formula is not only used, but more importantly the man must name himself before naming the woman. In fact, the name that he gives to her, ʾissāš, is the name used in Gen 2:22 by God when he forms the woman and brings her to the man. Therefore, the man, when he renames himself, comes into conformity with the name given to the woman (ʾiss, ʾissāš). However, in B6 the man again names the woman, this time in the same way that he named the animals.35 In B5, the verb “to call/give name” (wayyiqraš, in the Qal imperfect, which is the common verbal form of the GEA; in B5, it appears in the Niphal imperfect) appears again. The man continues to play the central character of the narrative by again naming the woman, calling her

34In the existent relationship between ʾādām (“man”) and ʾāḏāmā (“ground”), as in the case of ʾissāš and ʾiss, the feminine mark “š” forms a play on words. The element of origin is also present in both etymologies: man (ʾādām) is formed of the ground (ʾāḏāmā) (cf. 2:7; 3:23). Woman (ʾissāš) is formed/taken of the man (ʾiss). This etymological relationship reaches its climax when man returns to the ground in death and when man meets with the woman to create life. Trible points out that the unity of ʾiss and ʾissāš is functionally parallel to ʾādām and ʾāḏāmā (98). Jobling indicates that the narrative exploits the relationship between ʾādām and ʾiss because the man must name himself before he can name the woman. He notes that ʾādām is used in Gen 2 until the crucial point where the man names the woman, then he is called ʾiss. Thus the man is basically being renamed in conformity with the name given to the woman (“The Myth Semantics,” 41-49). Meier notes that non-Canaanite languages also preserve the grammatical possibility of such a play on words (S. A. Meier, “Linguistic Clues on the Date and Canaanite Origin of Genesis 2:23-24,” CBQ 53 [1991]: 19-21).

"hawwa" ("Eve") due to the divine judgment and reorganization of human life as a result of humanity’s disobedience to the divine command. It appears that the *Atra-Hasis* Epic of Old Babylonian mythology presents a thematic and literal parallel to Eve’s name ("the mother of all living"). However, it should be noted that this parallel exists only as a contrast between the OT and parallel ANE texts; there is a significant difference between Gen 3:20 and the parallel texts of the ANE. While in the *Atra-Hasis* Epic the one who receives the honorary name is the creative Mami, in the OT it is the created one, the first woman, who receives the name. Therefore, the Hebrew Bible presents a completely antimythical function to the Mami goddess.37

2. *The antithetical microsections B₆∥B₆ ‘* Microsections B₆∥B₆ ‘ are characterized by the antithetical phrases: "the man and his wife were naked" (B₆) and "made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them" (*wayyabalšēm*, as a complementary concept to "garments") (B₆ ‘). The second part of this parallel antithesis presents God as the central character of the narrative and makes him the action of the verb "to make" (*wayya’āṣ*, Qal imperfect of the verb *āṣ*, cf. Gen 3:1). Adam and his wife appear as passive subjects for whom God made garments and then "clothed them" (*wayyalbiswā*, Hiphil imperfect-suffix of the verb *labāṣ*, a causative form). It is significant that the word used for *āṣ* ("skin") forms a construct relation with "garments" (*kotenōt*, a noun feminine plural construct–noun masculine singular) and that the term "skin" specifically refers to the skins of animals related to the construction of the sanctuary, the system of

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36According to Kikawada, a word-by-word comparison of the expression "mother of all the living" in this Babylonian Epic shows that the honorary name of the goddess Mami (*belet-kala-ili*, "Mrs. of all the gods") followed the same formula as the name "Eve":

- *panumi mami nisassiki*  
- *inanna belet kala ili*  
- *lu ūsimki*  

(Formerly we call her Mami; now, "Mrs. of all the gods"; really that will be her name (1 246-48)

(“Two Notes on Eve,” *JBL* 91 [1972]: 33). The formula for this new name, "x of all the y," corresponds to the one used to designate Eve the "mother of all the living." It is also used for other personal names, such as *bunu-kala-ili* ("one Nobleman (?) of all the gods") that contain the formula "x of all the y," where "x" = "one Nobleman [?]," "y" = "the gods," and the qualifier "of all" (kala or kali, a cognate of Hebrew *kol* "all" or "totality"). Consequently, Mami and Eve are derived from the same formula; see H. B. Huffmon, *Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965), 127; W. von Soden, *Akkadische Handwörterbuch* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrossowitz, 1965-1981), 127a, 138b, 427a for similar names (e.g., *bin-kali-šarri*). See also in this list the last of the powerful kings of the Old Akkadian period (Kikawada, “Two Notes,” 34).

37Kikawada, “Two Notes,” 35.
sacrifices, and the cultic rites. Moreover, accounts of the ordination of the priests describe Moses' clothing them in their tunic.

The play on words of "naked" ("were both naked," 2:25) and "crafty" ("now the serpent was more crafty," 3:1) has been studied by F. Landy. It is significant that בֵּית ("naked") ends with the word קַרְבּוֹן ("naked"), while the following section (C), which is the central section and the narrative nucleus of the GEA, begins with the use of the word קַרְבּוֹן ("crafty"). This aspect, among others already mentioned, demonstrates the relationship and literary and linguistic correspondence between Gen 2 and 3, linking them together.

The primary meaning of the Hebrew word קַרְבּוֹן ("nakedness," in its several forms) is clear. The word does not refer at all to sexuality, but rather to a defenseless state of abandonment, devoid of possessions or power. For example, Gen 27:16; Exod 25:5; 26:14; 29:14; 35:7, 23; 36:19; 39:34; Lev 4:11; 7:8; 8:17; 9:11; 16:27; Num 4:6, 8, 10-12, 14; 19:5; 31:20.

For example, Gen 27:16; Exod 25:5; 26:14; 29:14; 35:7, 23; 36:19; 39:34; Lev 4:11; 7:8; 8:17; 9:11; 16:27; Num 4:6, 8, 10-12, 14; 19:5; 31:20.


In Job 1:21 and Eccl 5:14 the image of a child, who comes naked into the world and returns to death naked (i.e., missing all possessions), is used. A similar image is used in Hosea, where reference is made to a robbed woman who is stripped of her clothes and is naked as in the day she was born (2:3). In Job 22:6; 24:7, 10, the word is used to refer to the spoil and nakedness of the poor (cf. Isa 58:7 and Ezek 18:7, 16). The image is used metaphorically with relationship to the underground world in Job 26:6. In Amos 2:16, the hero will escape naked, robbed of his weapons and power; while in Isa 20:2-4, the term refers to prisoners who go naked into captivity (cf. Deut 28:48). In Mic 1:8, it refers to one robbed and naked in affliction. 1 Sam 19:24 refers to the intent of Saul to capture David by using Samuel's prophetic gift. Successive messengers are conquered by the Spirit of God and they prophesy. Saul also succumbs to this power and he prophesies before Samuel, remaining naked for a whole day and night. Only in Ezek 16:7, 22, 39; 23:29 does some sexual shade appear. But even here the essential meaning is that of a destitute, robbed, and vulnerable woman.

J. Magonet, "The Themes of Genesis 2-3," in A Walk in the Garden, ed. P. Morris and D. Sawyer, JSOTS Sup 136 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 43; see also R. M. Davidson, "The Theology of Sexuality in the Beginning: Genesis 3," AUS 26 (1988): 122-123; and J. A. Bailey, "Initiation and the Primal Woman in Gilgamesh and Genesis 2-3," JBL 89 (1970): 144-150. In Ugaritic, two terms related to the Hebrew קַרְבּוֹן ("nakedness") are קַרְבּוֹן ("to undress" or "to destroy") and קַרְבּוֹן ("naked/uncovered"). They do not refer to sexuality, but rather to a defenseless state and abandonment without possessions or power, similar to that of the corresponding Hebrew word:

KTU 1.14

The family [of Kirta] was denuded/destroyed
the house of the king perished (see context: KTU 1.14 I 10-25)
the first time the human couple are able to see themselves through the eyes of God, and they perceive their weakness, fragility, and dependence (Gen 3:7).

**Antithetical Chiastic Microstructure of Genesis 3:9-19**

*B7. The Man’s Sin*

The Lord God asked the man, “Where are you?” He answered, “I heard you in the garden and was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” God said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” (3:9-11)

*B8. The Woman’s Sin*

The man said, “The woman you put here with me gave me fruit from the tree and I ate it” (3:12)

*B9. The Serpent’s Sin*

The Lord God said to the woman, “What have you done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me and I ate” (3:13)

*B9’. The Serpent’s Judgment*

The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, you are cursed above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and eat dust all the days of your life, and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (3:14-15)

*B8’. The Woman’s Judgment*

To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase the pain of childbirth. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you” (3:16)

*B7’. The Man’s Judgment*

To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree, the ground will be cursed; you will reap it through painful toil all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles, and you will eat the plants

<table>
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<tr>
<th>KTU 1.16 II</th>
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<tr>
<td>9km.nky.t.tgr[b]</td>
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<tr>
<td>8km.skltl [-—]</td>
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<tr>
<td>91, rym.lbl [.sk]</td>
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4Van Dyke Parunak, 164.
of the field. You will do this until you return to the ground from which you were taken; you are dust and will return to dust” (3:17-19)

1. The antithetical microsections $B_1 \triangleright B_2$. This antithetical chiastic microstructure completes and closes section B’ of the GEA. It is fundamentally characterized by the divine judgment and the reorganization of human life after humanity’s disobedience to the divine command and the entrance of sin in the earth. In $B_2$, the man hears God’s voice in the garden and is afraid (an expression of his sin). $B_2$ is characterized by the description of God’s judgment on humanity: “cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.”

2. The antithetical microsections $B_8 \triangleright B_8’$. The microsections $B_8 \triangleright B_8’$ describe the woman’s sin, given in the man’s words, and the divine judgment as an exact antithetical parallelism. While $B_8$ is characterized by the man’s answer to God’s questions, in which man displaces his sin onto the woman, his partner,$^{44}$ $B_8’$ contains the description of God’s judgment on the woman (e.g., “pains,” “childbearing,” “and “with pain”).$^{45}$ It is interesting that the verb *harbā*-*arbeb* (“to increase”) appears in the verbal form of the Hiphil infinitive absolute–Hiphil imperfect of the verb *rābā*, with a similar linguistic formula to the verb *tākōl to*-*kel* (“to eat”) (2:16) and *mōt tāmūt* (“to die”) (2:17) in the antithetical section of B. Although in this case the verbs appear in the Qal infinitive absolute–Qal imperfect, the verbal forms are more common.

3. The antithetical microsections $B_9 \triangleright B_9’$. Finally, the antithetical microsections $B_9 \triangleright B_9’$ describe the serpent’s sin, given in the woman’s words, and the divine judgment as a precise antithetical parallelism. $B_9$ is characterized by the woman’s answer to God’s question, in which she places the blame for sin on the serpent (i.e., “the serpent deceived me and I ate”). $B_9’$ describes God’s judgment of the serpent (i.e., “cursed, . . . you will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust”). In 3:17, God curses the ground as an indirect punishment on humanity. In 3:14, he curses the serpent directly.

Thus the account of humanity’s disobedience, which arises in the Garden of Eden, falls at the center of the narrative. In a precise way, section C (Gen 3:1-7) reveals that humanity’s disobedience (i.e., their sin, which was the origin of evil in the world) is the narrative nucleus of the antithetical chiastic

"Remember that previously he had said of her: “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh . . . and they will become one flesh” (2:23-24, NIV).

"The Lord God appears again in the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve’s sin to begin a legal process of judgment and reorganization of human life. With relationship to the judgment of the woman and the use of Hebrew terms *išš*bōn (“pain/toil”), *mašāl* (“to rule over”), and *t’sō qa’* (“desire”) that appear in Gen 3:16, see, e.g., BDB, 780-781, 605, 921-922; Holladay, 280, 219, 396; and Davidson, 127-129."
structure of Gen 2-3 and the word \textit{wa=-ōkel} ("and I ate") is the point of return for the antithetical chiasm of the GEA as a whole.\textsuperscript{46}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{The Garden of Eden Account} & \\
\textbf{The Chiastic Structure of Gen 2-3 (III)} & \\
\hline
\textbf{B1} & \\
Divine Commandment and Organization of Human Life (Gen 2:16-25) & Divine Judgment and Reorganization of Human Life (Gen 3:8-21) \\
\hline
- "Lord God" (\textit{yhw} =\textit{lohim}) & - "Lord God" (\textit{yhw} =\textit{lohim}) \\
- "the man" (\textit{āl-hā-ādām}) & - "the man" (\textit{hā-ādām}) \\
- "tree in the garden" (\textit{ē-ē-hagan}) & - "trees of the garden" (\textit{ē-ē-hagan}) \\
(2:16) & (3:8) \\
\hline
\textbf{B2} & \\
- "commanded" (\textit{waysaw}) & \\
- "Lord God" (\textit{yhw} =\textit{lohim}) & - "I commanded you" (\textit{siyvwitkā}) (3:11b) \\
- "the man" (\textit{āl-hā-ādām}) & - "not" (\textit{līhī}) \\
(2:16a) & - "to eat" (\textit{koll-halk}) \\
& - "from the tree" (\textit{lumē-ē}) \\
& (2:16b-17a) \\
\hline
\textbf{B3} & \\
- "not" (\textit{lō}) & \\
- "to eat" (\textit{lō-keē}) & \\
- "from the tree" (\textit{lumē-ē}) & - "I commanded you" (\textit{siyvwitkā}) (3:11b) \\
(2:16b-17a) & & & \\
\hline
\textbf{B4} & \\
- "gave names" (\textit{wayyiqrā'}) & \\
- "the man" (\textit{hā-ādām}) & - "Lord God" (\textit{yhw} =\textit{lohim}) \\
(2:20) & - "called" (\textit{wayyiqrā'}) & - "the man" (\textit{ēl-hā-ādām}) (3:9) \\
& - "to the man" (\textit{lē-hā-ādām}) & \\
\hline
\textbf{B5} & \\
- "the man" (\textit{hā-ādām}) & \\
- "shall be called" (\textit{yiqqārē}) & \\
- "woman" (\textit{īśā}) (2:23) & - "Adam" (\textit{hā-ādām}) \\
\hline
\textbf{B6} & \\
- "naked" (\textit{rūmmi'īm}) & \\
- "his wife" (\textit{ūdē-īstō}) & - "named" (\textit{wayyiqrā'}) \\
& - "the man" (\textit{hā-ādām}) & - "Eve" (\textit{hawwā}) (3:20) \\
& (2:25) & \\
\hline
\textbf{B7} & \\
- "Lord God" (\textit{yhw} =\textit{lohim}) & \\
- "garments" (\textit{kotenōt}) "clothed them" (\textit{wayyalbēēm}) \\
& - "his wife" (\textit{ūdē-īstō}) & - "Adam" (\textit{lē-ādām}) (3:21) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{46}Walsh, 171.
The Disobedience of Human Beings in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-7)

Antithetical Chiastic Microstructure of Genesis 3:1-4

C₁ The serpent, who was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made, said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" (3:1)

C₂ the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, (3:2)

C₂' but God did say, 'You must not eat or touch the fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden or you will die'" (3:3)

C₁' The serpent said to the woman, "You will not die" (3:4)

1. The antithetical microsections C₁ || C₁'. The antithetical parallelism between microsections C₁ || C₁' is marked by the nouns "serpent" and "woman," and the verb "to say." The serpent is the main character of both microsections. In C₁, the negative particle loō (“not”) appears in connection with kōl (“all,” “any”; a noun masculine singular construct) that is used as a formula to express absolute negation (e.g., "you must not eat from any tree in the garden" [3:1]). In C₁', the expression "you will not surely die" (loō’ mōt t’mūtuš) is the same expression that appears in 2:17 (mōt tāmūt) in Qal infinitive absolute–Qal imperfect but without the negative particle, thus demonstrating that the serpent repeats God’s words but with a total negation of the divine command.⁴⁷

⁴⁷The common Hebrew term used for "serpent" is nāḥāṣ(e.g., Num 21:7-9; Deut 8:15; Prov 23:32; it appears 31 times in the OT). There is possibly a connection between nāḥāṣ and ‘rōšet ("brass") in Num 21:9, where Moses makes a "brass snake" (nāḥāṣ 'rōšēt). This connection with the word "brass" suggests that the serpent had a brilliant and luminous appearance that attracted the woman's attention. Another more sinister connection can be seen between the noun nāḥāṣ and the verb nāḥāš ("to practice divination, to observe signs," Gen 30:27; 44:5,15; Lev 19:26; Deut 18:10). This verb appears 11 times in the OT, always in the Piel form. The noun with which nāḥāš is related means "divination" (nāḥāś; Num 23:23; 24:1). The formula of divination in the ANE frequently included procedures that imply a serpent; see V. P. Hamilton, The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 187; cf. K. R. Joines, Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament (New Jersey: Haddonfield House, 1974), 2-3, 22; G. Contenau, La Divination chez les Assyriens et les Babyloniens (Paris: Payot, 1940), 222.

⁴⁸GKC, 152b; Jośu and Muraoka, 2:606. The serpent's first words should be considered a surprise expression. The serpent exaggerates the prohibition of God excessively, seeking to convince the woman that God did not allow them access to any tree of the garden (Hamilton, 186; see also Walsh, 164; cf. A. Schoors, "The Particle kā," OTS 26 [1981]: 271-273).

⁴⁹In the OT, the judge often expressed the death sentence through the use of a solemn formula. For the use of this formula, see Gen 2:17; 20:7; 1 Kgs 2:37, 42; 2 Kgs 1:4, 6, 16; Jer 26:8; Ezek 3:18; 33:8, 14. Two examples include Saul's conclusion of the judicial process of
2. The antithetical microsections $C_2||C_2$: Nevertheless, the antithetical parallelism that comprises 3:1-4 is $C_2||C_2$. As opposed to the previous microsection, the woman is the main character and the serpent the passive. In 3:2, an antithetical parallelism appears in conjunction with 3:1, 4 with the reversal of the words “woman” and “serpent.” In addition, an antithetical parallelism occurs with the phrases “we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden” (3:2) and “you must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden” (3:3).\(^{50}\) The word ḫtōk (“in the middle”) appears in many biblical passages and, especially in Gen 1 and 2, means “in the middle, in the center of a space or geographical place.”\(^{51}\) In this context, it specifically refers to the geographical location of the garden of Eden, a meaning confirmed by the Ugaritic term tk.\(^{52}\) However, the expression “in the middle of the garden” (ḥtōk-hagān) not only indicates the space and/or geographical location of the

Ahimelech with the sentence “You will surely die” (mōt tāmūt, 1 Sam 22:16). An identical sentence was proclaimed against Jonathan by Saul after Jonathan was pronounced guilty (1 Sam 14:44). See P. Bovati, Re-Establishing Justice: Legal Terms, Concepts and Procedures in the Hebrew Bible, JSOTSup 105 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 360-361.

\(^{50}\)In Ugaritic, the term gn (“garden”) is cognate to the Hebrew word gan. It appears in KTU 1.6 I 4:

\[
\begin{align*}
[tlt]\, & \, qn.zr\, h. \\
thrt.\, & \, km.\, gn.\, ap.\, lb.
\end{align*}
\]

Gibson, 74; see also Del Olmo Lete, 223. The literature of the ANE also contributes distant parallels with relationship to the food of plants or some edible substance and to the subsequent concession of life. Thus in the Epic of Gilgamesh, Utûnpištimm gives a plant to Gilgamesh that Gilgamesh calls “The Man that Ended up being Young in Old Age.” He then proclaims: “I will eat and in this way I will return to my youth” (ANET, 96). However, a snake ate the plant while Gilgamesh took a bath. In the same way, the Akkadian Myth of Adapa shares the topic of lost immortality. Anu offers Adapa the bread and food of life. Adapa rejects this offer, because he thinks that it is a trick, designed not to increase his wisdom but to kill him (ANET, 102). Here, the Hebrew Bible presents this theme in a different way from the neighboring people, from an antitymotypical perspective. Mythology supports the idea that life is obtained through a plant or a tree, or through bread and water. Scripture, however, presents the reason for death as being due not to a lack of access to the tree of life, but to the first couple’s sin in the garden; see B. S. Childs, “Tree of Knowledge, Tree of Life,” IDB 4, 697. The idea that the life is of God and not of the tree of life is also emphasized in Gen 2:9, where God placed the tree of life in the middle of the garden; see P. Watson, “The Tree of Life,” RestQ 23 (1980): 235.


\(^{52}\)In Ugaritic also, the term tk (“in the middle of, between”) is a preposition; cf. KTU 1.3 III 26 (Gibson, 49; see also Del Olmo Lete, 184):

\[
\begin{align*}
[am.\, wank]\, & \, bgyb. \\
[btk.\, gry.\, il.\, spn]
\end{align*}
\]

Come and I myself will search it out within my rock El Zephon
tree that the man and the woman should not eat of, but also the exact center of the GEA from a literary and linguistic perspective (section C).

Microstructure in Parallel Panels of Genesis 3:5-7

C₃ for God knows that when you eat of it (3:5a)

C₄ your eyes will be opened, (3:5b)

C₅ knowing good and evil (3:5d)

C₆ she took some and ate it, gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it (3:6cde)

C₇ their eyes were opened (3:7a)

C₈ they realized they were naked (3:7b)

1. The antithetical microsections C₂|||C₃. The parallel microsections C₃|||C₅ are marked by the verb “to eat” (wayyo‘kal, Qal imperfect of the verb ‘akal), the central word of the GEA, which, in C₅, is fully captured by the usage of the verb “to eat” and with the appearance of the man and woman as the main characters of the narrative. The narrative nucleus of the GEA of Gen 2-3 is humanity’s sin caused by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (“She took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it”; 3:6cde).

2. The antithetical microsections C₄|||C₆. The antithetical parallelism C₄|||C₆ is characterized by the phrase “your eyes will be opened” in C₆; but in a perfect antithetical parallelism, the serpent’s prediction is fulfilled when “the eyes of both of them were opened” (C₆).

3. The antithetical microsections C₇|||C₈. Finally, in microsections C₇|||C₈, the antithetical contrast settles on the verb yāda’ (“to know”), following the same line of content, literary, and linguistic thought found in C₄ and C₆ (“your eyes will be opened . . . , then [they] were opened”). Microsections C₅ and C₇ (“knowing . . . . And they knew”) record the fulfillment of the serpent’s prediction, but undoubtedly in a sense very different than the man and woman expected. In C₇, humanity was introduced to good and evil—or more exactly to evil, because they already knew the good from their relation to the divine and to the “good” creation (“it was good,” Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25; “it was very good,” Gen 1:31).³³

³³ For an analysis of the “tree of life” in the ANE literature and in the Hebrew Bible, see E. J. James, The Tree of Life (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 67-79. The second tree that receives a special emphasis in the GEA is ‘ēsh haša‘at tob wa‘ūnā ("the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"). Scholars have proposed a series of theories about the meaning of this second tree, from sexual or omniscient knowledge to cultural or ethical knowledge. W. M. Clark proposes that “the knowledge of good and evil” indicates moral autonomy ("A Legal Background to the Yahwist’s Use of ‘Good and Evil’ in Genesis 2-3," JBL 88 [1969]: 266-278). This theory is based on several OT texts, where “good and
However, microsection C₁, in antithetical parallelism, finds humanity naked, one of the consequences of their disobedience.

The Garden of Eden Account
The Chiastic Structure of Gen 2-3 (IV)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C₁</th>
<th>C₁'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- “the serpent” (w‘hannāḥāṣ)</td>
<td>- “the serpent” (hannāḥāṣ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “said” (wayyoś-mer)</td>
<td>- “said” (wayyoś-mer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “to the woman” (‘el-bā’issā) (3:1)</td>
<td>- “to the woman” (‘el-bā’issā) (3:4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C₂</th>
<th>C₂</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- “we may eat” (nō’-kel)</td>
<td>- “you must not eat” (lo’ to-’el’kul)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “fruit” (miśpēr)</td>
<td>- “fruit” (miśpēr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “from the trees in the garden” (‘ěr-hagān) (3:2)</td>
<td>- “from the tree that is in the middle of the garden” (bā’ēs ‘ēr b’tok-hagān) (3:3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C₃</th>
<th>C₃</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- “eat of it” (‘ēkām) (3:5a)</td>
<td>- “eat it” (watoś-kāl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “eat of it” (watoś-kāl) (3:6cde)</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C₄</th>
<th>C₄</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- “your eyes” (‘ěmek)</td>
<td>- “the eyes of both of them” (‘ēne s’nebem)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “will be opened” (‘ū-nipq’hū) (3:5b)</td>
<td>- “were opened” (watipq’ašma) (3:7a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C₅</th>
<th>C₅</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- “knowing” (yōḏ-ōḏ)</td>
<td>- “they knew” (wayyōḏ-hū)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “good and evil” (toḇ wa-rāḇ) (3:5d)</td>
<td>- “naked” (‘ērummīm) (3:7b)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

The literary analyses performed in this study provide evidence of the deep unity of the Hebrew text of Gen 2-3. The antithetical chiastic structure of evil is essentially a legal formula to articulate a judicial decision (e.g., Gen 24:50; 31:24, 29; Deut 1:39; 1 Kgs 3:9; 22:18; 2 Sam 13:22; 14:17; 19:35; Isa 5:20, 23). In conclusion, this interpretation appears to give the best meaning of the “knowledge of good and evil” in Gen 2-3. What humanity has been prohibited from is the power of deciding what is good and evil. This is a decision that God has not delegated to human beings; see also G. von Rad, El Libro del Génesis (Salamanca: Sigueme, 1977), 107-108. This interpretation agrees perfectly with Gen 3:22: “And the Lord God said, ‘The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil.’” The man has become a god because he has become his own center, the only reference point for his moral guidance. When the man tries to act in an autonomous way, he attempts to be similar to the divinity. This is evident because the man can consent to all the trees of garden except to one (cf. Hamilton, 166).
the Garden of Eden account (GEA) demonstrates the thematic, structural, literary, and linguistic unity of the different structural levels of this narrative. This deep unity indicates that Gen 2-3 is the work of a single author who used consistent patterns of thematic, literary, and linguistic terminology to describe what happened to the earth and its inhabitants some time after their creation. Consequently, Gen 2-3 presents a new narrative—the account of the origin of evil and death—in contrast to the Gen 1 account, which focuses on the origin of goodness and life.

The literary analyses performed in this study provide evidence of the deep unity of the Hebrew text of Gen 2-3, both in its literary structure and in its thought content. The antithetical chiastic microstructures and the parallel panel microstructures demonstrate that the GEA of Gen 2-3 comprises one literary unity. The attempt to dissect the text, attributing its components to multiple sources, is based on the presupposition of its internal incoherence. The demonstration of internal coherence in the literary structure of the GEA challenges the historical-critical tradition regarding Gen 2-3 and favors the interpretation that it comes from a single hand.